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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION: WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

Report of the Second Committee (Part VII)**

Rapporteur: Mr. Basheer F. ZOUBI (Jordan)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 95, sub-items (f), (g), (h), (i), (j) and (k) (see A/50/617, para. 3). Action on sub-item (f) was taken at the 40th and 42nd meetings, on 30 November and 8 December 1995. An account of the Committee's consideration of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/50/SR.40 and 42).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS A/C.2/50/L.46 AND L.66

2. At the 40th meeting, on 30 November, the representative of the Philippines, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Women in development" (A/C.2/50/L.46), which read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolutions 40/204 of 17 December 1985, 42/178 of 11 December 1987 and 44/171 of 19 December 1989, as well as all other relevant Assembly resolutions on the integration of women in development,

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as well as the resolutions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women on the integration of women in development,

"Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the effective mobilization and integration of women in development, 1/

"Recognizing the significant contribution that women make to economic activities and the major force that they represent for change and development in all sectors of the economy, especially in key areas, such as agriculture, industry and services,

"Emphasizing that empowering women is a critical factor in the eradication of poverty, since women contribute to the economy through both their remunerated and unremunerated work,

"Recognizing that the economic and financial crisis that exists in many developing countries has resulted in the rapid feminization of poverty, especially in rural areas and in female-headed households,

"Aware that women's continued lack of equal access to education and training, and their lack of control over land, capital, technology and other areas of production impede their full contribution to and opportunity to benefit from development,

"Recognizing that the informal sector is a major source of employment for women in many developing countries,

"Noting the important role played by the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women in the integration of women in development,

"1. Welcomes the adoption of the Beijing Declaration 2/ and Platform for Action 3/ by the Fourth World Conference on Women;

"2. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the effective mobilization and integration of women in development; 1/

"3. Notes with satisfaction the inclusion in the Platform for Action of critical areas of concern, namely, women in poverty, women in the economy, and women and the environment;

"4. Stresses that a favourable and conducive international economic and financial environment and a positive investment climate are necessary for the effective integration of women in development;

1/ A/50/399.

2/ A/CONF.177/20, chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

3/ Ibid., annex II.

"5. Calls upon all Governments to create an enabling environment to ensure the full participation of women in economic activities through, inter alia, the adoption of policy and legal measures and provisions of other necessary structures;

"6. Requests the international community, the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to assist developing countries by providing opportunities, including scholarships, to women and girls, in particular in the areas of science, technical and vocational training, so as to facilitate the full and effective contribution of women to development;

"7. Urges multilateral donors, international financial institutions and regional development banks to review and implement policies to ensure that a higher proportion of measures reach women in rural and remote areas."

3. At the 42nd meeting, on 8 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Conor Murphy (Ireland), introduced a draft resolution entitled "Women in development" (A/C.2/50/L.66), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.46, and orally revised the text as follows:

(a) In operative paragraph 6, in the second line, the words "at the above-mentioned Conference" were replaced with the words "in Beijing", and in the third line, the word "by" was replaced with the word "through";

(b) In operative paragraph 10, in the fourth line, the words "by increasing women's" were replaced with the words "through increased", and in the fifth line, the word "by" was inserted before the word "women's".

4. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.66, as orally revised, without a vote (see para. 7).

5. After the adoption of the draft resolution, a statement was made by the representative of Japan (see A/C.2/50/SR.42).

6. In view of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.66, draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.46 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE

7. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Women in development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 40/204 of 17 December 1985, 42/178 of 11 December 1987 and 44/171 of 19 December 1989, as well as all other relevant Assembly resolutions on the integration of women in development, and the resolutions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women on the integration of women in development,

Bearing in mind the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and other recent major United Nations conferences and summits,

Recognizing the significant contribution that women make to economic activities and the major force that they represent for change and development in all sectors of the economy, especially in key areas, such as agriculture, industry and services,

Reaffirming that women are key contributors to the economy and to combating poverty through both remunerated and unremunerated work at home, in the community and in the workplace, and that the empowerment of women is a critical factor in the eradication of poverty,

Recognizing that the difficult socio-economic conditions that exist in many developing countries have resulted in the rapid feminization of poverty, especially in rural areas and in female-headed households,

Aware that the continued discrimination against women, their continued lack of equal access to education and training, and their lack of control over land, capital, technology and other areas of production impede their full contribution to and opportunity to benefit from development,

Recognizing that the informal sector is a major source of entrepreneurship and employment for women in many developing countries,

Noting the importance of the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system in facilitating the advancement of women in development,

1. Welcomes the adoption of the Beijing Declaration 4/ and Platform for Action 5/ by the Fourth World Conference on Women;

4/ A/CONF.177/20, chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

5/ Ibid., annex II.

2. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the effective mobilization and integration of women in development; 6/

3. Calls for the urgent implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action as well as the relevant provisions contained in the outcome of all other major United Nations conferences and summits;

4. Stresses that a favourable and conducive international and national economic and financial environment and a positive investment climate are necessary for the effective integration of women in development;

5. Also stresses the importance of developing national strategies for promoting sustainable and productive entrepreneurial activities to generate income among disadvantaged women and women living in poverty;

6. Calls upon all Governments and all actors of society to implement the commitment made in Beijing to create an enabling environment through, inter alia, removing discriminatory barriers and ensuring the full and equal participation of women in economic activities through, inter alia, the adoption of gender-sensitive policies and legal measures and the provision of other necessary structures;

7. Urges all Governments to ensure women's equal rights and access to economic resources, and to increase women's access to credit by instituting innovative lending practices, including practices that integrate credit with services and training for women, and that provide flexible credit facilities to women, in particular rural women, women in the informal sector, young women and women who lack access to traditional sources of collateral;

8. Urges Governments to develop and promote methodologies for incorporating a gender perspective into all aspects of policy-making, including economic policy-making;

9. Calls upon the United Nations system, in particular its funds and programmes and specialized agencies, and all other relevant organizations to promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming gender perspective in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programmes;

10. Urges the international community, the United Nations system and other relevant organizations to give priority to assisting developing countries' efforts to ensure the full and effective participation of women in deciding and implementing development strategies, including through increased access to health care, capital, education, training and technology, as well as by women's wider participation in decision-making;

11. Urges multilateral donors, international financial institutions and regional development banks to review and implement policies in support of national efforts to ensure that a higher proportion of resources reach women, in particular in rural and remote areas;

6/ A/50/399.

12. Requests the United Nations development system to work towards establishing a more coherent approach to its support for women's income-generating activities, in particular credit schemes;

13. Decides to include on the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session a sub-item entitled "Effective mobilization and integration of women in development";

14. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session a report on action taken to implement the present resolution.